

Great American Smoke Out Set for Nov. 17, 2016: Get Ready, Set, Quit!

DOVER – You'd like to quit smoking. You've been meaning to quit but you just haven't picked a date yet. How about Thursday November 17, 2016? That's the date set by the American Cancer Society for its Great American Smoke Out!

The Division of Public Health (DPH) is encouraging you if you smoke, or you know someone who smokes, to use the date to create a quit smoking plan. By quitting, even for one day, smokers take an important step toward a healthier life and reducing their risk of cancer, diabetes, lung disease, and heart disease.

About 40 million Americans still smoke cigarettes, and tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the world. In Delaware, cigarette smoking adults was at an all-time low of 17.4 percent, according to the 2015 Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS). And that means that nearly one in five Delawareans still smokes, risking their health and the health of those around them every day.

While cigarette smoking rates have dropped nationally since the 1960s, cigar, pipe, and hookah – other dangerous and addictive ways to smoke tobacco – are very much on the rise. Additionally, though smoking among teens is also at an all-time low, DPH is aware of the increasing use of electronic vaporizing devices (e-cigarettes) among that population. Delaware public high school students reporting "current use" of e-cigarettes through the 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) jumped from 2.1 percent in 2012 to 23.5 percent in 2015, and approximately 40.5 percent of Delaware public high

school students said they have tried e-cigarettes.

In 2014, Delaware banned the sale of e-cigarettes to minors and in 2015, Delaware's Clean Indoor Air Act was expanded to include prohibiting the use of e-cigarettes and other electronic vapor devices in workplaces and indoor public places.

"Smoking kills people – there is no "safe" way to smoke tobacco," said Department of Health and Social Services Secretary Rita Landgraf. "I am proud to say Delaware has been a leader in the effort to create healthy, smoke-free, indoor workplaces and public places for our citizens, but we must continue the fight. Too many people still smoke and too many teens are experimenting with e-cigarettes. "

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 85 percent to 90 percent of lung cancers are caused by tobacco use. DPH continues to remind smokers of the dangers of secondhand smoke, both to children and other adults. Secondhand smoke can also aggravate the symptoms of asthma and COPD.

"Lung cancer remains the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Delaware and the nation. Quitting tobacco and other smoking products isn't easy, but it's worth it," said DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay. "It's a process that starts one day at a time, and the Division of Public Health has a variety of resources to help you start and be successful in your journey to leading a tobacco-free life."

The Delaware Quitline provides free tobacco cessation counseling services for Delaware residents who are 18 years of age and older. When a person calls the toll-free Quitline number (1-866-409-1858), they have the option to receive cessation counseling over the phone and, unique to Delaware, can opt to receive counseling in person by a local health care professional trained in cessation. Some participants may

qualify for free pharmaceutical cessation aids such as patches, gum, nasal spray and prescription medicines. Since its inception in 2001, there have been over 100,000 calls to the Quitline with over 50,000 enrolling in cessation services. Through November 2016, all participants enrolled in either phone or face-to-face counseling can receive free pharmaceutical cessation aids while supplies last.

For those who may need some assistance and don't feel the Quitline is right for them, QuitSupport.com offers a free web-based option. This online cessation counseling service makes quit coaches available to provide tips on quitting tobacco. For individuals under the age of 18, Not- On-Tobacco (NOT) is a cessation service available at most school wellness centers. Contact 1-800 LUNGUSA for more details on the NOT program.

There are many benefits to quitting tobacco products, some which can be noticed right away:

- Food tastes better.
- Your sense of smell returns to normal.
- Your breath, hair, and clothes smell better.
- Your teeth and fingernails stop yellowing.
- Ordinary activities leave you less out of breath (for example, climbing stairs or light housework).
- You can be in smoke-free buildings without having to go outside to smoke.

Within minutes of smoking your last cigarette, your body begins to recover. Here are some short, and long-term health benefits:

- 20 minutes after quitting – Your heart rate and blood pressure drop.
- 12 hours after quitting – The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- 2 weeks to 3 months after quitting – Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.
- 1 to 9 months after quitting – Coughing and shortness of

breath decrease. Tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs (called cilia) start to regain normal function in your lungs, increasing their ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.

- 1 year after quitting – The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of someone who still smokes. Your heart attack risk drops dramatically.

Quitting also helps stop the damaging effects of tobacco on how you look, including premature wrinkling of your skin, gum disease, and tooth loss.

For more information about tobacco cessation, visit DPH's [Tobacco Prevention and Control Program](#).

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.